

Claims

What is claimed is:

1. A method for selectively blocking outgoing calls comprising:
  - 5 a) receiving blocking indicia from a subscriber or representative thereof who is associated with a telephony terminal;
  - b) establishing blocking criteria based on the blocking indicia;
  - c) receiving a first message indicative of a call being initiated from the telephony terminal; and
  - 10 d) determining whether to block the call or allow the call to continue based on the blocking criteria.
2. The method of claim 1 further comprising sending a second message with instructions to either block the call or allow the call to continue  
15 based on the blocking criteria.
3. The method of claim 2 wherein the second message is sent to a telephony switch supporting the telephony terminal and the first message is received from the telephony switch.  
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4. The method of claim 2 wherein the second message is sent to a telephony server supporting the telephony terminal and the first message is received from the telephony server.
- 25 5. The method of claim 1 wherein the blocking indicia is received via one of the group consisting of a web interface and a voice interface.
6. The method of claim 1 wherein the blocking criteria is associated with a plurality of telephony terminals including the telephony terminal.  
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7. The method of claim 6 wherein at least two of the plurality of telephony terminals are from different types of telephony terminals consisting of circuit-switched wireless, circuit-switched wireline, packet-based wireline, and packet-based wireless.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein the blocking criteria are configured to block calls to at least one specified called party.
- 5 9. The method of claim 8 wherein the specified called party is identified in the blocking criteria by a telephony address.
- 10 10. The method of claim 1 wherein the blocking criteria are configured to block calls based on time or date.
- 11 11. The method of claim 1 wherein the blocking criteria expire after a defined period of time.
- 15 12. The method of claim 1 wherein the blocking criteria are configured to block calls based on financial authorization and further comprising accessing and using financial records to help determine whether to block the call or allow the call to continue.
- 20 13. The method of claim 12 wherein the blocking criteria are based on whether a pre-paid balance has been exceeded.
- 25 14. The method of claim 12 wherein the blocking criteria are based on a subscribed amount of time being exceeded.
- 30 15. The method of claim 12 wherein the blocking criteria are configured to allow calls to at least one called party when financial authorization is not provided.
16. The method of claim 1 wherein the blocking criteria are configured to block calls that are not directed to at least one identified called party.
17. The method of claim 1 wherein the blocking criteria are configured to block calls to telephony addresses meeting defined wildcard criteria.

18. The method of claim 1 wherein the blocking criteria are configured to block calls that are at least one type of call.
19. The method of claim 1 wherein the blocking criteria are configured to require a plurality of conditions to be met prior to blocking the call.
20. The method of claim 1 further comprising sending instructions to provide an audible message to a caller at the telephony terminal when the call is blocked.
21. A system for selectively blocking outgoing calls comprising:
- a) at least one communication interface; and
  - b) a control system associated with the at least one communication interface and adapted to:
    - i) receive blocking indicia from a subscriber or representative thereof who is associated with a telephony terminal;
    - ii) establish blocking criteria based on the blocking indicia;
    - iii) receive a first message indicative of a call being initiated from the telephony terminal; and
    - iv) determine whether to block the call or allow the call to continue based on the blocking criteria.
22. The system of claim 21 wherein the control system is further adapted to send a second message with instructions to either block the call or allow the call to continue based on the blocking criteria.
23. The system of claim 22 wherein the second message is sent to a telephony switch supporting the telephony terminal and the first message is received from the telephony switch.
24. The system of claim 22 wherein the second message is sent to a telephony server supporting the telephony terminal and the first message is received from the telephony server.

25. The system of claim 21 wherein the blocking indicia are received via one of the group consisting of a web interface and a voice interface.
- 5 26. The system of claim 21 wherein the blocking criteria are associated with a plurality of telephony terminals including the telephony terminal.
- 10 27. The system of claim 26 wherein at least two of the plurality of telephony terminals are from different types of telephony terminals consisting of circuit-switched wireless, circuit-switched wireline, packet-based wireline, and packet-based wireless.
28. The system of claim 21 wherein the blocking criteria are configured to block calls to at least one specified called party.
- 15 29. The system of claim 28 wherein the specified called party is identified in the blocking criteria by a telephony address.
30. The system of claim 21 wherein the blocking criteria are configured to block calls based on time or date.
- 20 31. The system of claim 21 wherein the blocking criteria expire after a defined period of time.
- 25 32. The system of claim 21 wherein the blocking criteria are configured to block calls based on financial authorization and the control system is further adapted to access and use financial records to help determine whether to block the call or allow the call to continue.
- 30 33. The system of claim 32 wherein the blocking criteria are based on whether a pre-paid balance has been exceeded.
34. The system of claim 32 wherein the blocking criteria are based on a subscribed amount of time being exceeded.

35. The system of claim 32 wherein the blocking criteria are configured to allow calls to at least one called party when financial authorization is not provided.
- 5 36. The system of claim 21 wherein the blocking criteria are configured to block calls that are not directed to at least one identified called party.
37. The system of claim 21 wherein the blocking criteria are configured to block calls to telephony addresses meeting defined wildcard criteria.
- 10 38. The system of claim 21 wherein the blocking criteria are configured to block calls that are at least one type of call.
39. The system of claim 21 wherein the blocking criteria are configured to require a plurality of conditions to be met prior to blocking the call.
- 15 40. The system of claim 21 wherein the control system is further adapted to send instructions to provide an audible message to a caller at the telephony terminal when the call is blocked.